The Sketch

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ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

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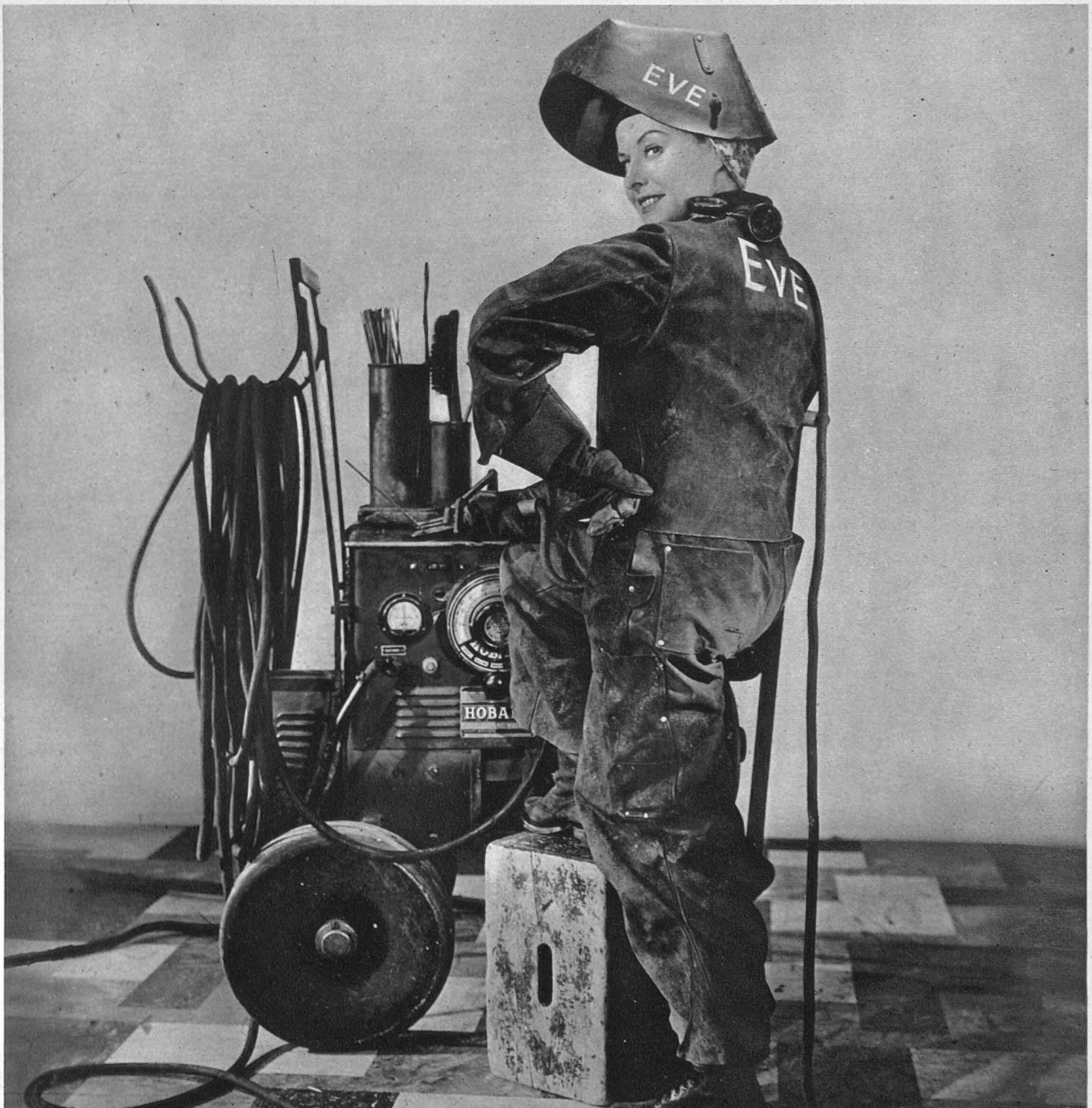


GLAMOUR—AND SAFETY!
WELDER PAULETTE GODDARD.

Glamour, combined with safety, has been achieved by PAULETTE GODDARD *in the shipyards scenes of her new Paramount picture, "I Love a Soldier," due at the Plaza on December 8. She plays Eve Morgan, stage-door canteen entertainer, and shipyards' welder, and what's more, dresses like such a girl, both on and off duty. She worked in the welders' school for three days and interviewed the workers to get a line on their taste in dress. Sonny Tufts plays opposite her.*

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

Food of the Future. My eye was caught by the heading of an article "The Future of Eating"; but it did not tell me much. I gathered that people would go on eating after the war, and that a number of prospective wives might have learned by that time that the frying-pan and the tin-opener did not constitute the whole art of cooking; but I did not learn what people would eat when the world's larder was restocked. I want to know whether I shall ever taste again the true, the blushful Scotch ribs as they were of yore, or that old-time South Down mutton which made your vaunted *pré salé* a thing of naught. But such knowledge is not vouchsafed to mortals, nor, probably, such food for many a long day to come. But why should we complain when, fortunate race that we are, we can have all those delicious dried-egg masterpieces with which the Ministry of Food advertisements make our mouths water?

"Oh, boy, will we knock 'em, or will we?"

DRAWN BY CANE.

Good Old Days.

As the future of eating is still obscure and not very reassuring, in spite of the catering arrangements at Hot Springs, perhaps we can cast a longing, lingering look at the past of eating. This, according to *The Times*, is what they had at the five upper tables at the Lord Mayor's Banquet on November 11, 1844: "80 tureens of turtle, 60 bottles of sherbet, 3 boiled turkeys and oysters, 16 roast pullets, 20 dishes of fowls, 15 dishes of capons, 16 French pies, 16 pigeon pies, 16 hams (ornamented), 13 tongues, 1 quarter of house-lamb, 1 round of beef, 1 stewed rump of beef, 4 sirloins, rumps and ribs of beef, 13 dishes of shell-fish, 40 jellies, 16 blancmanges, 13 dishes of creamed tarts, 13 dishes of almond pastry, 16 Chantilly baskets of fruit, 20 dishes of mince pies." Then follow "removes" of turkeys, leverets, pheasants, geese, partridges and wild fowl. Dessert: 32 pineapples, 64 dishes of grapes, 80 ice-creams—and so on. Wines: Champagne, hock, claret, Madeira, port, sherry—but I really can't go on. The thing is becoming indecent.

Giddy Goat.

That is how they used to eat, and the marvel, which no modern person will ever understand, is how they ever did it. Either they must have all swelled up and burst like V2's at an early age, or the human constitution has greatly changed in a hundred years. For myself, I can read of these mountains of edibles without a twinge of envy, for the mere sight of them would scare my appetite away. I admit, however, that it is a bit of a contrast to read that shipments of New Zealand goat are shortly to be expected in this country. There are assurances that the goat's reputation for toughness (like that of Himmler) is undeserved. Call it kid, and it melts in the mouth. That is what they think throughout the East, where goat is highly esteemed. After all, the mess of pottage for which Esau sold his birthright was almost certainly goat: and what was good enough for Esau ought to be good enough for you. So don't grumble, but order a nice saddle of goat for Sunday.

"Well, you told me to bring a couple of birds. . . ."

DRAWN BY MICHAELSON.

"My wife thinks she'd look nice with a black bonnet, and her body painted green."

DRAWN BY L. B. MARTIN.

Seen and Not Heard.

To take another glance at the groaning tables of yester-year, they seem to have been rather pompous affairs, according to Mr. James Agate. In his day, he tells us, "children dined downstairs on Sundays only. There was generally a visitor or two, and we were not

SALVAGE ALL YOUR OLD LETTERS—FOR VICTORY

allowed to speak until dessert. Then a little bell was rung, my father and his guests lit their cigars, my mother and her friend put on a smiling aspect, and for half an hour the children would be allowed to make nuisances of themselves. Then there were other rules and observances. I cannot remember that any of us youngsters ever sat in my father's armchair, though we occasionally took liberties with my mother's. And I swear that the morning paper was untouched until my father had seen it. Time has changed all that for the worse."

Not What They Were. I hope Mr. Agate enjoyed it and feels that it did him a lot of good. Some of us did not have the advantage of being so well brought-up; indeed, like Huckleberry Finn, we should have fled to a raft if anybody had tried to "siverlize" us like that. I cannot think that the youth of to-day are quite as degenerate as Mr. Agate believes. "To-day the young people loll in the best chairs while parents sit wherever they can, or stand." I don't mind them lolling in my armchair so long as they give it up to me when I want it—and, by heaven, they do, and don't need more than a glance to stimulate them to action! "The paper is torn to shreds" (*not* the *Sunday Times*, I trust?) "and adolescents keep up a perpetual din. I have no doubt that presently a bell will be struck permitting the elders to talk." In short, the country is going to the dogs. Things are not what they were when I was a boy. Well, well, they never have been, of course—but we manage somehow. For myself, it makes me feel very old and dull if a solemn hush falls on the young in my presence. Let them prattle; but then (unlike Mr. Agate) I prattle myself sometimes!

Spinach or Death?

On one thing I am sure Mr. Agate and I can agree—the family table, or, for that matter, the Lord Mayor's table, was not plagued with vitamins. There was Gregory's Powder (I can taste it still!), and liquorice powder, and even castor oil, but there were no vitamins. These things are becoming a racket. Nothing will restrain scientists from inventing more and more of them; they have now used up nearly the whole alphabet, but there was a vacancy for K and it has now been filled. It seems to me appropriate that the Professor who has made this discovery is called Dam. This Dam vitamin coagulates the blood; without it you may bleed to death if you cut yourself shaving. And where do you think it is to be found? The question is merely rhetorical—in spinach, of course. It always comes back to spinach. There is undoubtedly a world-wide conspiracy among scientists to inflict more and more spinach on humanity, especially little, helpless children. It is sheer sadism. Whether it is better to live on spinach than to bleed to death is a question which everybody must answer for himself.

Export and Import.

I suppose vitamins are now an important subject of Domestic Science and are being studied intensively by our young wives and mothers. They had better investigate the vegetable supply of Canada—where, however, I do not remember any serious outbreak of spinach, but have pleasant recollections of vitamins in the form of abundant orange-juice. Fifteen British girls per day are becoming Canadian citizens by marriage, and wives are now one of our principal exports across the Atlantic. The total to date is given as 23,000. The exodus would be a little depressing if there were not lively reciprocity in the matter. If all this marital interchange does not make for that "better understanding" of which we hear so much, nothing will. It is a sort of spontaneous cosmopolitanism, which may be more effective (if I utter no blasphemy) than even Charters and Covenants.

"I am looking for a house called 'The Belfry'—I believe it is next to a large flock of bats."

DRAWN BY HAROLD.

"According to 'im, e 's our reply to 'Itler's secret weapon!"

DRAWN BY BEAUCHAMP.

To the Right.

Perhaps cosmopolitanism will be so powerful that it will induce us to change our rule of the road. Speaking unpolitically, I see a strong movement towards the Right. I must confess that the prospect appals me, though I see the force of all the arguments. It is difficult to justify being an obstinate exception among civilized nations, but I should like to know why the Pilgrim Fathers, who presumably drove on the left in this country, took it into their heads to change to the right when they crossed the Atlantic? Just to show how different they were, I suppose—but it was really very thoughtless of them.

The Great Mystery.

Having studied my income tax assessment, and the chatty notes which accompany it, to the best of my poor ability, I have abandoned any hope of understanding its mathematics. Now that we enjoy all the benefits of P.A.Y.E., I wonder how many people in the country,

[Continued overleaf.

except accountants, understand what they are paying and why? Not that it matters much, because it is no use arguing with the Inland Revenue anyhow; but one cannot help wondering about the boons and blessings of a tax which not one taxpayer

"Fancy dressing the poor boys like that in this bitter weather. No wonder they have to run to keep warm!"

DRAWN BY SILENUS.

in a hundred understands, or even attempts to understand. The only people who seem to me to benefit are the chartered accountants, who must be doing a thriving business. They *say* they know all about it, and I nod and try to look intelligent when they explain things, but I have long since resigned myself to the fact that there are certain subjects, such as Relativity, space-time and income tax which no explanation will ever make clear to me this side of the grave. On the other side of it, I hope to be free of these worries, but I am none too sure.

The New Rich.

Income tax or not, there seems to be plenty of money about during this war. There is some free spending in the United States, where I read that an honest son of toil has been known to give £240 for a watch, and one adoring husband has put down £300 on the counter "for anything my wife may choose." Apparently these little luxuries are nothing to the orgy of spending which will set in after the war, for when all the jewels and furs and watches have been bought, there is a little to put by as well—in fact, about 32 thousand million pounds of savings (so it is estimated) all waiting for a Victory splurge. I wish I knew how these things were done. I am thinking of taking up peddling, because I see that two Indian pedlars the other day were found to have banked £4000. Smuggling also seems to be a major industry, but not all of us get the chance of slipping over to France and coming back with a few hundred dozen champagne as a *souvenir de la grande guerre*. To judge by some of the stories one reads and hears, we might as well have a pipe-line across the Channel for Black Market fluids.

Faith, Hope and Charity.

I commented recently on the vagaries of charity-at-law. A benefaction for the promotion of chess was held to be charitable because it was "educational." A less highbrow but more practical testator left a sum of money to provide prizes to encourage "merit in local industries, such as engravers, painters, throwers, designers and artists, and such meritable achievements as singing and pianoforte and violin playing." But no, that wouldn't do! Chess is charitable, and anybody can leave a million for studying the Sicilian Opening, but a benefaction to encourage music and the arts is not "charitable" according to English law. The testator in this case was said to be the original of Arnold Bennett's "Card" (that delightful fellow) but the learned Judge said that "despite that happy start in life, he had made his own will"—which was the most eccentric, Card-like thing he ever did in his life. Truly, charity in our law needs a lot of faith and hope, and even then it is almost certain to peter out as soon as it reaches the Chancery Division.

Swords into Scissors.

I don't know whether anybody has ever left any money for the promotion of scientific hairdressing, but it has sometimes struck me in the barber's chair, where one has plenty of opportunity for reflection, that it would be a laudable charitable object. I am glad to see that the International Hairdressers' Society proposes to establish refresher courses for demobilised hairdressers after the war. This is post-war planning of the more intelligent kind. It would be unfortunate if the hand that held the scissors or the razor inadvertently employed the technique of the bayonet or the methods of the assault course, and we shall all feel safer when the returning hairdressers have been inducted into the ways of peace.

Here we have a parade of officers of the 19th Regiment of the Line, THE GREEN HOWARDS *(The Yorkshire Regiment), which includes Colonel Brockhurst, who recently took over command from Colonel Ramsden. Shortly after being raised in 1688, the Regiment's first service was in Flanders. As everyone knows, they fight again over the same ground in the present war, with their former tradition for bravery, one instance of which is C.S.M. Hollist, who won his V.C. in Normandy. The nickname Green Howards comes from the tunic facings.*

CARICATURES BY FRED MAY.

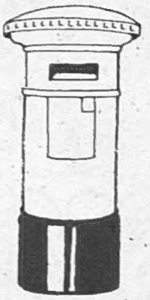
The one-hundred-and-third of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of "The Sketch" is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

"MY DEAR, I ALWAYS SAY, I SHOULD HATE NOT TO HAVE BEEN IN ONE OF THE SERVICES!"

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT,—You remember George, our American, who left his riding-boots in our attic and went away to the battle? Well, I got a letter from him a few days ago. It said: "Dear Henrietta, I have been wounded, getting along fine—Love, George." The address was a military hospital somewhere in England, and the writing was so shaky that I showed the letter to Charles, who said, "Hum," and handed it back again.

"Do you think he's bad, Charles?" I said.

"Can't say," said Charles. "Seems a bit shaky."

"I think I ought to go and see him," I said.

"Now don't start tearing about all over the country every time you hear somebody's wounded," said Charles. "You know we're asked not to travel."

"Yes, Charles."

"And Evensong is beginning one of her colds."

"Yes, Charles."

"You generally go down with something yourself this time of year."

"Yes, Charles."

Then there was silence and Charles went on reading *The Times*, turning over the pages in an angry, rustling sort of way. Then he said: "If you really feel you must go, you'd better get on with it."

"I clung to him."

"Suppose it was Bill, wounded in America, Charles," I said.

"I know," said Charles. "But for God's sake keep warm, Henrietta. There's enough sickness about without having you on my hands all the winter."

As soon as I decided to go and see George in hospital, I began to be terrified of the journey. I confided my fears to Lady B., who was sympathetic and confessed that the very idea of mounting a train threw her into a frenzy, and considering she had spent the whole of her life travelling all over the world, she couldn't think why this thing had come upon her, unless it was old age.

As soon as it got about that I was going away, everybody came round to give help and advice.

Faith brought a suit-case, which she said held a lot and was light to carry, and Little Mrs. Simpkins brought a small flask of brandy to go in my handbag.

"I'm told travelling is terrible," said Mrs. Savernack. "Take care you aren't knocked down and trampled underfoot, Henrietta."

"If you hear a Flying Bomb coming, throw yourself down, no matter where you are."

"But suppose it isn't a Flying Bomb?"

"I dare say people will understand when you tell them you come from the West Country and don't know better."

Next morning Charles took me to the station. On the platform I clung to him as a drowning man to his rescuer. "If Evensong's cold gets worse, you'll have to go to the Hotel for your meals," I said.

"All right," said Charles gloomily, "but who's going to feed the cat?" Then he kissed me hurriedly on the chin and left.

In the train, I remembered I had left my torch behind. The shock was so great I nearly had a swill out of Mrs. Simpkins' flask. The train was late arriving at the junction where I had to change, and it was quite dark.

People hurried by, their faces in the dimmed lights looking like the dead; engines screamed, trains shunted, and a Voice of Doom kept booming through a loud-speaker. Everywhere people seemed to be saying good-bye, locked together in desperate embraces.

"This," I said aloud, "is what mankind has made of the beautiful world God gave to him."

"Pardon?" said an old lady standing near.

It was after nine when I arrived at the hospital. "I know it's long past visiting hours," I said to the Orderly in the hall, "but my train was very late."

"Are you Captain Anderson's mother?" said the Orderly.

I was surprised at being taken for an American, for Charles always says I am the perfect example of the decayed and disappearing West Country gentry, but then I saw a twinkle in the Orderly's eye. "Temporarily," I said, and was taken upstairs.

George had cradles all over him to keep the bed-clothes from touching him. The lamp beside his bed was shaded so that the light didn't shine on his face, but I could see that he looked very ill. "Only a minute," whispered the Nurse.

George moved his head from side to side on the pillow and muttered something I couldn't hear. I put my hand on his. "Hullo, George," I said softly.

George opened his eyes and looked at me. "Hullo, Henrietta," he whispered.

"Hullo, George."

"Your hands are very cold."

"Yours are very hot."

George sighed and shut his eyes. Was it for this that I had flung myself half across England? I shut my eyes, too, and prayed that I might think of just one simple, short, heartening sentence to comfort him in his pain and distress. My mind remained a blank.

Presently he opened his eyes again. "Hullo, Henrietta," he said; "still there?"

"Still here, George."

"Good," said George.

"I've got to go now, but I'll come back to-morrow."

"Good," said George, and I disentangled my fingers and tiptoed away.

George was better next day, and he went on getting better. I stayed for a week, and before I left I got off some of the things I had thought up in the train, about America, and his Mother, and the girl he's going to marry, and he enjoyed them all.

I arrived home with a heavy cold and a temperature and went straight to bed.

"'Hullo, George!'"

When Charles came home in the evening I said to him: "Every time I shut my eyes I see sort of flashes."

"What are they like?" said Charles, peering at the thermometer

"Stars and stripes," I said.

Always your
affectionate
Childhood's
Friend,

HENRIETTA.

"Stars and Stripes."

Here in their thatched Devonshire cottage near Salcombe are the mother, wife and children (ROBERT *and* ROSEMARY) *of* CAPTAIN (TEMP. MAJOR) ROBERT HENRY CAIN, V.C., *who won his decoration during the grim stand of the First Airborne Division at Arnhem, in Holland. Attached to the S. Staffords (First Airborne Division), on September 19 Major Cain was in command of a rifle company which was cut off from the rest of the battalion. The Germans repeatedly tried to break in by infiltration; had they done so the whole situation of the airborne troops would have been jeopardised. On September 20 he went out alone, armed with a Piat, and dealt with a Tiger tank which approached; holding his fire till it was twenty yards away; he then opened up. The guns turned on him, shooting away a corner of the house under which he lay. Wounded by bullets and falling masonry, Major Cain held on, scoring direct hits, finally immobilising the tank with a howitzer he had brought up. Next day he drove off three more tanks by fearless use of the Piat and complete disregard for his own safety; refusing medical attention for a perforated ear-drum and multiple wounds. A concerted attack with guns, flame-throwers and infantry the following day was warded off by Major Cain, then armed only with a 2-in. mortar, and few men. By daring leadership and skill he demoralised the Germans who, after three hours' engagement, withdrew in disorder. Major Cain, runs the citation, by outstanding devotion to duty and remarkable powers of leadership, was to a large extent personally responsible for saving a key sector from the hands of the enemy. He showed superb gallantry throughout the whole battle of Arnhem.*

MOTHER, WIFE AND CHILDREN OF ARNHEM V.C. MAJOR CAIN.

MASTER GLUBB, *son of Glubb Pasha, Commandant of the Arab Legion, wearing uniform and Arab head-dress, was presented to* F.-M. VISCOUNT GORT, V.C., *new High Commissioner and C.-in-C., Palestine and Transjordan, on his arrival in Jerusalem.*

WING COMMANDER J. DE L. WOOLDRIDGE, *D.S.O., D.F.C. and B who set up a Mosquito Atlantic Flight Record of 6 hrs. 46 mi is a composer, and pupil of Sibelius. His symphonic poem, "T Constellations," was played by the R.A.F. Sympho Orchestra, and accepted by the N.Y. Philharmonic Orchest*

MR. HERBERT MORRISON *proposed the toast at the Simpson Services Club lunch in honour of the Civil Defence Services. He is seen with* DR. S. L. SIMPSON, MRS. SIMPSON *and* MAJOR HUSKISSON, M.C. *(l. to r.).*

The engagement of Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. Martin Charteris, K.R.R.C., second son of the late Lord Elcho and of Lady Violet Benson, to the HON. GAY MARGESSON, *second daughter of Viscount Margesson and Mrs. France Leggett, has been announced.*

Left: *When* H.M. THE KING *recently visited Portsmouth, he saw the "plot" of the Allied Invasion as it was at 4.30 a.m. on "D" Day, in the plotting room of Command H.Q., a chamber 100 ft. underground. The W.R.N.S. staff sat round the table at their stations while* COMMODORE G. BELLARS, *Chief of Staff to the C.-in-C., explained the "plot."*

Right: MISS HELEN GAHAGAN, *the actress, and wife of actor Melvyn Douglas, has been elected Democratic Congresswoman in California. She has two children, aged eleven and six respectively.*

ROYAL AND OFFICIAL OCCASIONS, WEDDINGS &

BABY KATHERINE WINGOOD, *daughter of* FLIGHT LIEUT. A. J. WINGOOD *and* MRS. WINGOOD, *attended the Investiture when the King decorated her father with the D.F.C., for work on bombing missions against enemy territory, and is here proudly displaying the medal. She could not resist the temptation to suck the corner of the case.*

The marriage of COMMANDER D. VINCENT JONES, D.S.O., R.N., *son of Sir Vincent and Lady Jones, to* MISS JACQUELINE SLOGGETT, *elder daughter of Lieut.-Colonel A. J. H. Sloggett and Mrs. Sloggett, took place at Cockington Church, Torquay.*

MISS NINA RUTH SCOONES, *elder daughter of Lieut.-Colonel Sir Geoffrey Scoones, K.B.E., C.S.I., etc., and Lady Scoones, is engaged to Brigadier Sidney Harcourt Kent, O.B.E., the K.O.Y.L.I., only son of Major and Mrs. G. H. Kent.*

Left: MISS DORIS CONNELL *is known over the East End and Thameside as "Tough Tony." Formerly a hair-dressing assistant, she has driven Assistant Fire-Force Commander R. Green since early 1941. She has been to hundreds of blitz and flying-bomb incidents without turning a hair.*

Left: LADY MARY STRACHEY, *formerly Lady Mary Palmer, is Princess Elizabeth's Lady-in-Waiting. She is seen in her wedding dress after her marriage to Major the Hon. Anthony Strachey, son of Lord O'Hagan.*

Right: MRS. WINSTON CHURCHILL *attended the first night of the new naval farce, "The Dog Watches," at the King's, Hammersmith, and obviously found it an entertaining show.*

ENGAGEMENTS AND DISTINGUISHED PERSONALITIES.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

ANOTHER of Hollywood's masterful tussles with history has brought forth a Technicolor romance about the life and love of Chopin, called "A SONG TO REMEMBER" (New Gallery). As usual, the history has come out rather the worse for wear, and those who thought themselves familiar with the details of the composer's career may well be astounded at some of the facts brought to light in this film.

According to Mr. Sidney Buchman, who wrote the screen-play, Chopin was a young Polish revolutionary who was forced to flee from Warsaw for insulting a Tsarist Governor at a dinner-table. With his music under his arm, and a letter of introduction to the great publisher Pleyel in his pocket, Chopin (Cornel Wilde) goes to Paris, his old tutor Joseph Elsner trailing along with him as a sort of nursemaid. This tutor, as played by Mr. Paul Muni, is a doddering old fuss-pot whose very appearance is enough to make Pleyel anxious to slam the door on his protégé. But by one of those happy coincidences that every script-writer keeps up his sleeve, who should be in M. Pleyel's outer office but Franz Liszt, running through an unpublished work by a new composer, called—can you guess?—Frederic Chopin. And when the new composer sits down at the next piano and finishes the piece as a duet, Liszt is so enchanted that he introduces the young fellow to the notorious George Sand (Merle Oberon), and Mme. Sand arranges a début for Chopin that makes him the darling of Paris.

Moved by his pallor and excited by his genius, George Sand now takes over the job of nurse-maiding Chopin. She is not nearly such a duffer of a nanny as dear old Professor Elsner, and in a jiffy she has the wan young composer whirled away to Majorca, where she keeps him *incommunicado*, in the vilest weather, composing chamber music. Acting on Mme. Sand's instructions, Chopin is perfectly beastly to his old tutor, and simply goes on composing waltzes and nocturnes, with a rug wrapped round his shoulders. But Professor Elsner, pottering more than ever to mark the passage of years, never gives up hope that his pupil will come back in the end to good, solid Polonaises and the spirit of revolutionary Poland. At last, with the help of Chopin's early Polish sweetheart, and a bag full of Polish earth, he does manage to win the composer away from the charge of his icy charmer. Chopin, already a pretty sick man, sets out on an Aid-for-Poland concert tour, pounding the ivories in every capital in Europe. He gets sicker than ever, takes to his bed in Paris, and with his old chum Lizst playing softly in the next room and Professor Elsner still pottering solicitously, he gets sickest of all and dies.

Now what are the public going to think of this curious arrangement of the lives of two of the world's great celebrities? I know what my learned friends are going to think. They are going to clasp their brows in agony, and moan "Hollywood! Good grief, what can one do with these people?" But what will be the reaction of the general public, who know little and care less about George Sand and Frederic Chopin? I'll tell you. I think they are going to love the thing.

If I owned a theatre of my own, I should lose no time in booking "A Song to Remember," and I shouldn't be afraid of losing money. Why? Because "A Song to Remember" is the most musically-exciting film since "Fantasia," and I am convinced that British audiences like to be musically excited to-day.

For nearly two hours you can listen to the very best of Chopin, played superbly. The programme doesn't give the name of the pianist, leaving us to assume that it is Mr. Cornel Wilde's touch that produces that magnificent sound from the keyboard—as indeed, for all I *know* to the contrary, it may be But whoever is responsible for the solo piano in "A Song to Remember," he is a first-class performer of Chopin. And I'm prepared to bet that a public that responded so warmly to the Warsaw Concerto in "Dangerous Moonlight," and the Cornish Rhapsody in "Love Story," will not pass this greater music by.

THE BEST PLAYS.

* * * "BLITHE SPIRIT" *(Duchess)*. Noel Coward's play. Penelope Ward, Joyce Carey, Nicholas Phipps.

* * * "PINK STRING AND SEALING WAX" *(Phœnix)*. 1880 Brighton comedy. Iris Hoey, Barbara Waring, Malcolm Keen.

* * * "UNCLE HARRY" *(Garrick)*. Murder thriller, with Michael Redgrave and Beatrix Lehmann.

* * OLD VIC THEATRE COMPANY *(New)*. Laurence Olivier, Ralph Richardson, Sybil Thorndike, Nicholas Hannen in repertory.

* * "ARSENIC AND OLD LACE" *(Strand)*. Lilian Braithwaite, Mary Jerrold, Naunton Wayne, Edmund Willard.

* * "WHILE THE SUN SHINES" *(Globe)*. Farce. Jane Baxter, Hugh Wakefield.

* * "SWEETER AND LOWER" *(Ambassadors)*. Second edition "Sweet and Low" revue: H mione Gingold and Henry Kenda

* * "TO-MORROW THE WORLI *(Aldwych)*. Nazi youth. Rob Harris, Elizabeth Allan, Je Cadell, David O'Brien.

* * "THE BANBURY NOSE" *(Wyndham's)*. Family histo with Roger Livesey, Ursula Jea

* * SADLER'S WELLS BALLET SEAS *(Princes)*. Robert Helpmar Margot Fonteyn. Constant La bert and Alec Sherman conduct

* * JOHN GIELGUD in Reperto *(Haymarket)*. Yvonne Arnau Peggy Ashcroft, Leslie Banl Leon Quartermaine.

* * "THE LISBON STORY" *(Stoll)*. Play with music.

N.B.—While we shall always do our best to keep this list up to Consult your daily paper; rin

"Step Lively" (Leicester Square) stars FRANK SINATRA *as naïve playwright Glenn, who turns up to ask where is the drama he sent producer Miller with $1500 to back it? Christine* (GLORIA DE HAVEN), *starring in Miller's projected revue, finds Glenn has a voice.*

Jenking (EUGENE PALLETTE) *acting for a millionaire backer, plans to turn the revue down. Miss Abbott* (ANNE JEFFREYS) *has heard Glenn sing, is entranced, and being the millionaire's girl-friend, cries "Close the deal," so Jenking produces his cheque book.*

Miller (GEORGE MURPHY; *kneeling) wanted for a big hotel debt, seizes the millionaire's cheque, which is snatched in turn by hotel auditor Wagner* (ADOLPHE MENJOU). *Glenn stages a poison-suicide to stall off Wagner, who, seized with remorse, allows the revue to be staged.*

Some years ago, Bette Davis and Miriam Hopkins appeared together, as friendly rivals, in a pretty good film called "The Old Maid." The combination apparently proved successful, for it has been repeated in another film, not nearly so good, called "OLD ACQUAINTANCE" (Warner's). This piece, adapted from a play by John van Druten, is all about a highbrow novelist called Kit (Miss Davis), who suffers terribly at the hands of a lowbrow novelist called Millie (Miss Hopkins), and puts up with it cheerfully because Millie was her best friend at school, and the two girls used to walk home together. Kit, in fact, carries her devotion to such lengths that she refuses to marry Millie's husband, even when Millie's marriage has finally broken up; and ten years later refuses to marry another man, so that he can be free to marry Millie's daughter. It is all very noble and inspiring, but for my part, I 'd see my old school-friends to blazes before I put up with the sort of disgusting behaviour Miss Davis endures from Miss Hopkins for twenty years.

I am told by friends who saw the stage play, with Edith Evans in the Davis rôle, that it was a powerful and even intelligent work. Since Mr. van Druten himself wrote the screen-play, with a certain Lenore Coffee, one can only assume that the playwright has one standard of intelligence for the stage and another for the screen, or that Miss Coffee went in for some heavy adaptation. Bette Davis, who is probably better than any other actress in Hollywood at this high-tension stuff, does much to redeem it, but even her observant study of a vigorous personality growing old in body and mind can't elevate "Old Acquaintance" above the level of a woman's magazine story. As the two gentlemen in the case, John Loder and Gig Young left me with an impression of tedious merit, and Miss Hopkins' performance alternates between pets and vapours as a quite impossible she.

Starred by "The Sketch." * * **=top-score.*

• "SOMETHING IN THE AIR" *Palace).* Jack Hulbert, Cicely urtneidge.

• "MERRY-GO-ROUND" *(Adelphi).* glo-Russian revue, with Russian llet: George Lacy, Pat Leonard, na Tarakanova.

"HAPPY AND GLORIOUS" *alladium).* Revue with Tommy nder, Zoë Gail, Elisabeth Welch.

"SCANDAL AT BARCHESTER" *ric).* Trollope with Felix mer, Milton Rosmer, Olga do, Dorothy Hyson.

• "PRIVATE LIVES" *(Apollo).* l Coward revival, with Kay nmond, John Clements.

MEET ME VICTORIA" *ctoria Palace).* Cockney humour Lupino Lane, Dorothy Ward.

"NO MEDALS" *(Vaudeville).* time housewife. Fay Compton.

• "IT DEPENDS WHAT YOU MEAN" *(Westminster).* Bridie's latest. Alastair Sim, Angela Baddeley.

• "THREE'S A FAMILY" *(Saville).* Comedy. With Vera Pearce.

• "IS YOUR HONEYMOON REALLY NECESSARY?" *(Duke of York's).* Ralph Lynn, Enid Stamp Taylor.

• "THE LILAC DOMINO" *(His Majesty's).* Revived, with Pat Taylor, Leo Franklyn, Bernard Clifton, Elizabeth French.

• "THIS WAS A WOMAN" *(Comedy).* Sonia Dresdel in melodrama.

• "THE MERRY WIDOW" *(Coliseum).* Cyril Ritchard, Madge Elliott.

• "THE LAST OF MRS. CHEYNEY" *(Savoy).* Jack Buchanan, Coral Browne, Athene Seyler.

nnot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur. atre to avoid disappointment.

If you like a simple, rather childish musical comedy, with a lot of primary colour and no problems, I suggest "IRISH EYES ARE SMILING" (Gaumont and Marble Arch Pavilion). The story is about the rise to fame of a young man called Ernest Ball, composer of "Irish Eyes," "Mother Machree," and other lush Irish-American ballads. The music, as a matter of fact, is rather above the customary standard for this type of picture.

"Western Approaches" (Warner, December 8), a film-tribute to the Merchant Navy, is the story of twenty-one men, survivors of a torpedoed merchantman, the "Jason," who spend fourteen days in a lifeboat on the Atlantic. Picture shows a WREN OFFICER *recording the position of the sunk "Jason." King George's Fund for Sailors will benefit from the opening night's receipts.*

The stars are two comparative newcomers to Hollywood, Dick Haymes and June Haver. Mr. Haymes has a bland face, and a voice with a nice, rich texture, like a film magnate's carpet. I think we shall hear quite a lot of him. I am not so sure about little Miss Haver, who seems to me like a pocket edition of Betty Grable, without the Grable knack of impressing her presence on you.

If "Irish Eyes are Smiling" seems to you childish, it is not beyond the bounds of probability that "RAINBOW ISLAND" (Plaza) will seem to you positively infantile. If the film is about anything, it is about three merchant seamen—Eddie Bracken, Barry Sullivan and Gil Lamb—who are shipwrecked on a tropical island, and are fortunate enough to find that it lies in the Dorothy Lamour archipelago. This nonsense is all in Technicolor, and, we are told "because of soldier, sailor and marine correspondence, Dorothy Lamour went all out to wear sarongs which would find favour with the fighting men everywhere. . . . She wears seven different sarongs in the picture, one of them a flowered affair that brought gasps even from the hardened workers on the studio sound stage." Not a bit like the yawns the whole affair brought from one hardened critic in the royal circle.

Finally, a reminder, to those who are not irrevocably bound to West End cinemas, to look out for a film called "LEFT OF THE LINE." This fine documentary, which begins its London release this week, has been directed by Major David MacDonald, the man who was responsible for "Desert Victory." It is the official record of the action fought by British and Canadian troops from D-Day to the liberation of Brussels. It runs for only half an hour, but into these thirty minutes it packs a drama more compelling than that of many a million-dollar epic. The names that filled our minds in those days of high summer; the Normandy beach-heads, Caen, Falaise, the Seine crossings, Amiens, the Belgian frontier; all these names from the communiqués derive a new significance from the picture. "Left of the Line" has had to be shot and cut to a frame, and the story gains in authority from the compression of its telling.

In "Laura" (Empire), GENE TIERNEY, *playing the name-part, is said to have been murdered. The body found had the head all but blown away; was lying outside her New York apartment. Carpenter* (VINCENT PRICE) *was her aunt's intimate friend; had received large sums of money from her.*

Mark McPherson (DANA ANDREWS) *is the astute detective in charge of the case. Seeing Laura's portrait in her apartment he finds it strangely appealing; sits down and dozes. The missing Laura enters, and is subjected to a grilling fire of questions, to which she gives nonchalant replies.*

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

MISS ELIZABETH GOUDGE,

for writing a £30,000 prize novel while so suitably living in "Providence Cottage."

MISS GOUDGE *is a pretty good cook.*

Left: Providence Cottage and its owner.

IT recently fell to the lot of MISS ELIZABETH DE BEAUCHAMP GOUDGE, forty-four-year-old English novelist, to be awarded the £30,000 prize for the best Mayer novel of the year by M.-G.-M. chief Mr. B. Mayer, for her book "Green Dolphin Street." The profits from its American circulation alone are expected to earn Miss Goudge another £12,500 at least, while the film rights are part of the £30,000 bargain. Covering some forty to fifty years in the middle of the nineteenth century, it is a story of two sisters in love with one man who mistakes their names and marries the wrong girl. Miss Goudge's father was Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford and Canon of Christchurch Cathedral. She lives with her invalid mother in Providence Cottage, at Westerland, Devon, so named because the builder only got his materials for the structure just before war restrictions came in. Miss Goudge was educated at Southbourne and Reading University. She has had thirteen books published, her best-known being "Smokey House." She also writes children's books and plays. They are all written during fixed hours in longhand!

She has tomatoes in the greenhouse.

MISS GOUDGE'S MOTHER *is proof-reader and her severest critic.*

Novelist MISS GOUDGE *knows how to grow vegetable marrows as well as how to write a prize-winning novel.*

LORD VANSITTART, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., M.V.O., *posed beneath a portrait of his ancestor, Arthur Vansittart (1691-1760).*

THE MAN WHO KNOWS WHAT W

By the River Misbourne; LORD *and* LADY VANSITTART *with their Alsatian, Peter.*

In a sheltered corner of the garden at Denham Place. The bust is an ancient Roman work.

In the drawing-room, in which hangs a portr before W

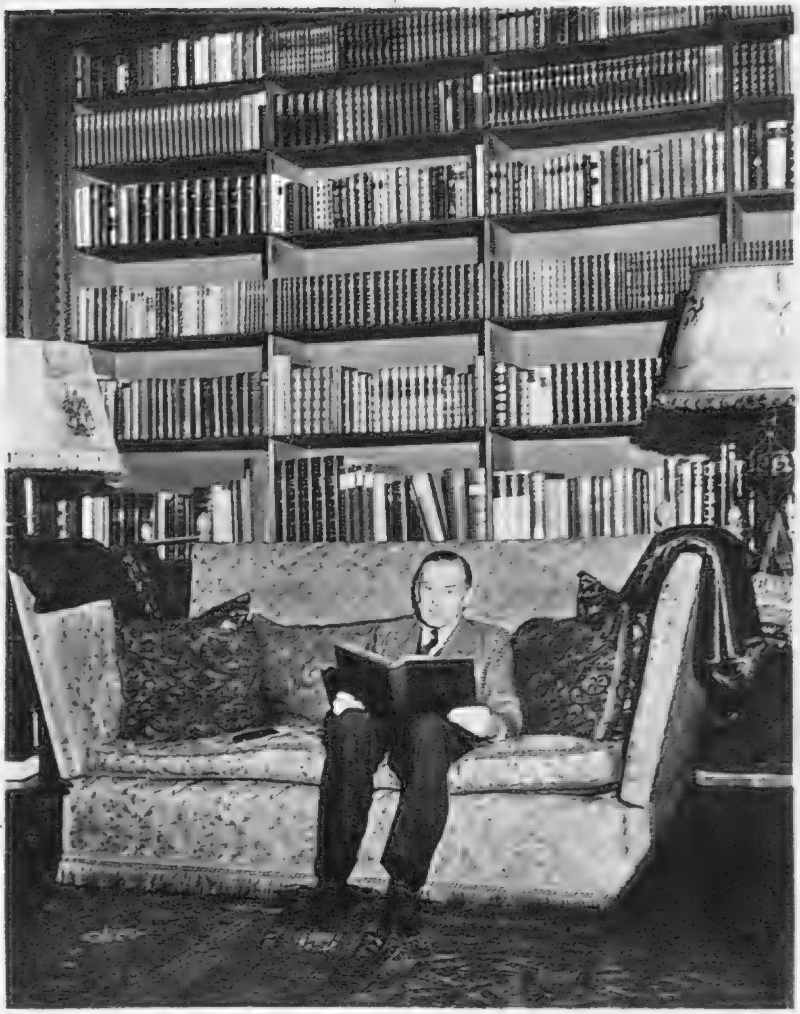
LORD VANSITTART OF DENHAM, known to his friends as "Van," is one of the most forceful personalities of the day. He has a brilliant brain, and enjoyed a distinguished career in the Diplomatic Service, which he entered in 1903. He has held many important posts; and was Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Principal Private Secretary to Prime Ministers Baldwin and Ramsay MacDonald (1928-30), and Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs during 1930-38, and from 1938-41 served as Chief Diplomatic Adviser to the Foreign Secretary. On leaving the Foreign Office in 1941, he was created first Baron Vansittart of Denham. Lord Vansittart has never wavered in his opinion of Germany and the Germans, and in the treatment that he considers should be meted out to them. His vigorous voice has been heard on the Radio, and his trenchant articles may be

[Continued opposite.

N.B. ***A Coloured plate is inserted in this issue.***

UGHT TO DO WITH THE GERMANS.

At the front door of their seventeenth-century house, Denham Place; the Vansittarts start for a stroll in the grounds.



"Van" in his famous library, which contains many hundreds of books, many of them in fine bindings.

...enry Vansittart, Governor-General of Bengal ...astings.

In the library: Lord and Lady Vansittart discussing a new book with lively interest.

Continued.]
read in the daily Press. His diagnosis of the malady of our chief enemy is that the nation has failed to progress ethically and politically, because it has been systematically mis-educated for 150 years; and he strenuously opposes any soft, foolish fancies that once the Nazi régime has been defeated, the Germans will automatically become good neighbours, kind, peace-loving and civilised. Their very soul has been branded as Moloch's own. Lord Vansittart, who was born in 1881, comes of an old family, many members of whom have played a part in English history. He is a son of the late Captain Arnold Vansittart, of Foot's Cray Place, Kent. He is a novelist, poet and playwright, and writes as easily in French as in English. Lady Vansittart, who is his second wife, was Miss Sarita Enriquita Ward. Her first husband was the late Sir Colville Barclay, Bt., British Ambassador to Lisbon. Lord and Lady Vansittart live at Denham Place.

MR. *and* MRS. ARCHIBALD AULDJO JAMIESON, *parents of Captain David Jamieson, V.C., wave to their elder daughter,* MRS. DINAH TOLLEMACHE, *as she starts off for a trip in the governess cart with her sons,* TIMOTHY *and* NICHOLAS.

A quiet afternoon at Drove House; MRS. JAMIESON *is engaged with a petit point card-table cover, and her daughter and husband are reading.*

THE PARENTS OF THE TALLEST V.C.

MR. AND MRS. ARCHIBALD AULDJO JAMIESON are the parents of Captain David Jamieson, Royal Norfolk Regiment, who was awarded the Victoria Cross for his superb qualities of leadership and personal bravery displayed during thirty-six hours of close and bitter fighting in Normandy, south of Grimbosq, on August 7 and 8, 1944. He, personally, was largely responsible for the holding of an important bridgehead over the River Orne, and for the repulse of seven German counter-attacks. He is twenty-four years of age, and is 6 ft. 5 in. in height, the tallest man in the Royal Norfolk Regiment, and probably the tallest V.C. of this war. Mr. A. A. Jamieson is the Chairman of Vickers. He won the M.C. in the last war.

THE VASTY FIELDS OF FRANCE ON THE SCREEN: OLIVIER'S "HENRY V."

"And gentlemen in England, now a-bed, Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here; And hold their manhood cheap, while any speaks That fought with us upon St. Crispin's day"; Welsh bowmen at the battle of Agincourt.

"Suppose that you have seen, The well-appointed king at Hampton pier Embark his royalty; and his brave fleet With silken streamers the young Phœbus fanning." LAURENCE OLIVIER as Henry V. setting sail for France.

"The King's a bawcock, and a heart of gold A lad of life, an imp of fame . . . I kiss his dirty shoe . . . I love the lovely bully!" Pistol (ROBERT NEWTON).

THE première of Laurence Olivier's production of Shakespeare's "Henry V." for Two Cities Films was fixed for Monday last, November 27, at the Carlton Theatre, Haymarket, in aid of the Airborne Forces and the Commandos Benevolent Funds. All the expenses of the première are being met by Odeon Theatres and the entire proceeds will go to the funds. Laurence Olivier played Henry V. at the Old Vic in 1937, and gave a very fine performance. He has produced and directed the film version, which is a courageous attempt to provide ". . . a Muse of fire, that would ascend the brightest heaven of invention!"

"It is as easy for me, Kate, to conquer the kingdom as to speak so much more French; I shall never move thee in French unless it be to laugh at me." Henry V. courts Princess Katherine (RENÉE ASHERSON).

AMERICAN SMALL-TOWN SCANDAL AND LAUGHTER:

Surprise warning. J. J. Ferris (FRANK MORGAN) *tells Casanova Q. Brown* (GARY COOPER) *that his daughter, Madge* (ANITA LOUISE), *will make a pretty dreary wife.*

Agony of mind. Madge Ferris, all gotten up in her wedding-gown, and Mrs. Ferris (ISABEL ELSOM), *on tenterhooks, while Mr. Ferris carries on an interminable long-distance talk with Casanova.*

"CASANOVA BROWN," described as "a gay picture of matrimonial mix-up," is International Pictures' new film, due at the Odeon, Leicester Square, on December 1. It stars Gary Cooper as a small-town teacher with a taste for adventures—on rather a smaller scale than those associated with his namesake, the Venetian adventurer, but sufficient to cause a pother. He is about to marry Madge Ferris; but trouble arises over a baby by his previous union with a New York Society girl, Isabel Drury. The marriage has been dissolved because Casanova carelessly burnt down the Drury family mansion; and baby

[*Continued opposite.*

Casanova has kidnapped his own baby, and taken it to an hotel. He asks the Manager (IRVING BACON) *for goats' milk, and is told he can't keep goats in his room.*

Wifely reproaches. Isabel (TERESA WRIGHT) *realises that the fire which destroyed her home was caused by Casanova's cigarette.*

Casanova and Monica (MARY TREEN) *find that baby has gained a pound in a week—if she gains 52 lb. a year, will she become a giantess?*

Daring abduction. Casanova Brown, dressed up as a surgeon, kidnaps his own daughter from the hospital. His marriage has been dissolved and the child is due for adoption.

GARY COOPER AS "CASANOVA BROWN."

Very awkward situation. Casanova Brown's cigarette has set fire to the Drury mansion, which has been burnt to the ground. His wife, Isabel (TERESA WRIGHT), *is taking it hard.*

Crime in the home. Mr. J. J. Ferris spends much time and ingenuity on robbing the money-box which belongs to his nephew. Casanova is to marry Anita Ferris.

Whirlwind courtship. Casanova Brown, small-town teacher, proposes to the wealthy Society girl, Isabel Drury, much to her parents' annoyance.

Troubles of being a father. Casanova Q. Brown is taken to a Maternity Hospital and put through every kind of test by Nurse (LORNA DUNN) *and X-radiologist* (SAM ASH).

Continued.]
is to be adopted. This cannot be done until full data on the father's physical condition has been provided by hospital tests. Casanova, however, on seeing baby, decides to keep her, and stages an abduction. Hotel chambermaid Monica acts as assistant nurse, and Casanova is ready to marry her to provide the infant with a mother! But his anxious fiancée, Madge, tracks him down; and so does his ex-wife. To quote the official description, "In the hilarious conclusion, poor Casanova eventually blunders his way through into clear and peaceful waters when he finds that he and Isabel really love each other, after all."

Happy father and baby daughter. Casanova Brown, having kidnapped the infant from the hospital, is fascinated by it, and spends considerable time playing with it.

Reunited by the charm of their offspring. Isabel (TERESA WRIGHT) *and Casanova Brown* (GARY COOPER) *beside the cradle of their baby girl.*

ROBERT HELPMANN'S MORALITY BALLET: "MIRACLE IN THE GORBALS."

The Glasgow slum crowd turns against the Stranger (ROBERT HELPMANN, *top right*) *when they see him with the penitent Prostitute* (CELIA FRANCA) *at the window of her house.*

The Official (DAVID PALTENGHI) *tries to restrain the Stranger* (ROBERT HELPMANN) *when the beautiful Suicide* (PAULINE CLAYDEN) *is brought in.*

Dancing in the slums of Glasgow: JULIA FARRON, FRANKLIN WHITE, PAULA DUNNING *and* HENRY DANTON.

CELIA FRANCA, *the Prostitute. Under the influence of the Stranger she repents, but the crowd turns against Him and He is murdered.*

"MIRACLE IN THE GORBALS," new Sadler's Wells ballet at the Prince's Theatre, with scenario by Michael Benthall, music by Arthur Bliss, *décor* by Edward Burra, and choreography by Robert Helpmann, is a modern Morality play. It is set in the Gorbals, slum district of Glasgow, and the characters include a Suicide, Lovers, a Beggar and an Official. The Stranger arrives in their midst, and when the Suicide is brought in, restores her to life. The Prostitute becomes a penitent. but when the Stranger enters her house, the crowd, incited by an Official, turn against Him and do Him to death. There is much movement and drama in this swiftly moving and impressive ballet, for which Arthur Bliss's music was specially written.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDWARD MANDINIAN.

Tragedy in the Glasgow slums: The Official (DAVID PALTENGHI) *looks sternly at the body of the young Suicide* (PAULINE CLAYDEN), *which has just been brought in.*

Elizabeth (ROSALIE CRUTCHLEY): *"I want you to let me divorce you."*
Arnold (JOHN GIELGUD): *"Me? Thank you very much! Do you suppose I'm going to sacrifice my career for a whim of yours?"*

Lady Kitty (YVONNE ARNAUD): *"Sugar?"*
Arnold: "No, thank you. I gave it up."
Lady Kitty: "So wise—so bad for the figure."

SOMERSET MAUGHAM'S "THE CIRCLE" COMPLETES A CYCLE.

FIRST played at the Haymarket in 1921, revived in 1931, "The Circle," W. Somerset Maugham's glittering comedy, returns again to the Haymarket in John Gielgud's season of repertory. Yvonne Arnaud plays Lady Catherine Champion-Cheney, who bolted with Lord Porteous thirty years before. And they, while holding themselves up as awful examples to prospective bolters, lend to Arnold's runaway wife Elizabeth, and her lover Edward Luton, a car to bolt in. Lady Kitty's dreary husband, Clive Champion-Cheney, is played by Cecil Trouncer. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CECIL BEATON.)

"I hate exercise." Lord Porteous (LESLIE BANKS) *refuses to go for a walk with his old inamorata Lady Kitty.*

Arnold Champion-Cheney, M.P., antique collector, dilettante in interior decoration, toys with a chair till he gets it just where he wants it.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

MISS PAMELA HANSFORD JOHNSON'S new novel is so unlike her last that it might almost have been written by another hand, or, at any rate, conceived by another brain, since the hand is more a servant to habit than the mind is. "Winter Quarters" was a comprehensive picture of a detachment of soldiers quartered in an English village: it had two main "units," the Army and the village, and the members of each group, though sharply individualised, were always seen in relation to the group. "The Trojan Brothers" is an intensive study of a handful of people. They have a collectivist aspect, because they nearly all belong to the stage; but it is their personal, private lives that count in the book. Sid Nichols and Benny Castelli are the front and hind parts of a comic horse (in the course of the story they exchange rôles), and the close companionship necessitated by the conditions of their "turn" extends to their leisure hours. They are great friends, and one of Miss Johnson's themes is the fluctuations in their friendship. Benny gets married, and so admits into his life another loyalty: Sid falls in love with a woman who is anathema to Benny's wife and to most of Sid's circle.

The Hand of Destiny. From the moment when, with playful rudeness, Sid calls out to Betty Todd in the theatre, we realise that he is to be a victim of Destiny. The kindest man alive, with good will to all, but also with a hasty temper, he has a morbid streak in his nature, and accuses himself of having killed his wife, who died long since from bearing his child. This conception of himself as a killer haunts his mind and helps to bring about the catastrophe. Betty, for whom he falls, is a rather cheap *femme fatale*, a snob and a climber, using her husband's money to make a name for herself as a hostess. She is also Sid's cousin who has risen in the world, and in their alternating moods of love and hate we can trace the influence of acute class feeling—she trying to humiliate him with her wealth, he to mortify her with recollections of their common lowly origin. Each is a poison to the other, but whereas Betty's hard nature and aptness for amorous adventure enable her to work him out of her system, to Sid she becomes an obsession. He does not really love her, but she is in his blood and necessary to his pride, the pride she fosters and flouts. He is a nice man and she is a nasty woman; this fact, fundamental to the story, is obvious to his friends. But Sid, like many other tragic figures, is blind—not to her worthlessness, which he fully realises, but to the folly of running after her.

When he decided to settle in the village of Beckhole, near Whitby, ALGERNON NEWTON, R.A., found that the "local"—the Birch Hall Inn—had no hanging sign, so he offered to repair this omission and paint one himself. Above he is seen hanging it. The painting, valued at hundreds of guineas, is framed in a special weatherproof casing to prevent deterioration.

The Chorus. Some of the minor characters are memorable—Hockaby, who "believed in Friendship with a big F," and whose stately witticisms do much to enliven this painful story, and Anna, the pathetic Russian, whose devotion Sid, with unconscious cruelty, uses for such a terrible end. The unfailing loyalty of Sid's friends keeps us reminded of what a good fellow he really is, and their efforts to help him give poignancy to the tragedy; just as their essential sanity, under their touchiness and quarrelsomeness, darkens the shadows in Sid's failing mind.

Miss Johnson has shed none of her cleverness or her ability to load every rift with ore. The concentration of her style, its implications and overtones, is extraordinary. Sometimes the cleverness draws attention to itself, but generally it is assimilated by her heart and mind and creative energy. Seldom have I read a novel in which the end looms more menacingly than it does here. Indeed, I put the book aside for several days, simply to spare myself the pain and horror of the last pages.

A Custom of the Country. I was afraid that Mr. Rhys Davies, too, was aiming at our heart-strings, for his heroine, Miss Olwen Powell, treads a path which seems certain to end badly. Some years ago—Mr. Davies does not say how many—a curious and agreeable custom obtained in certain remote Welsh villages called "courting in bed." Those who defended the practice—and "The Black Venus" opens with a scene in which it is being discussed by the elders of the village—maintained that bed was a far safer place for courting than woods or fields; and they (or rather Mr. Rowlands, the big gun of the place) carried the day. It was, strangely enough, a victory for the chapel over the church; the clergyman, and a kill-joy English resident called Mrs. Drizzle, having protested against the custom. Accordingly, at the close of the chapel service on the Sunday following Olwen's public exoneration, she, in the traditional manner, caught the eye of a promising young man; and he was not slow to scale the ladder at her window and be entertained with wine and cakes. He had many successors, for Olwen was extremely slow in making up her mind, and perhaps never would have, had not one of the courtings gone farther than the symbolic bolster allowed.

Not Cast for the Part? Though told realistically, "The Black Venus" is in intention, I think, an allegory, and the two points of view do not always harmonise. In Olwen's nature were strong strains of the Puritan, the feminist, the blue-stocking and the governess; her interest in her suitors was critical and educational rather than amorous. She was looking for an Ideal Man; and as each candidate, baffled and furious, was shown the window, she told him, kindly but firmly, exactly why he had fallen short of her ideal. All this is very amusing to us, if not to the courters; but would a woman of Olwen's type have relished this particular form of ritual? Surely most of the things she wanted to know could have been better discovered at afternoon tea. And would the chapel (I kept asking myself), which is usually considered the home of prudery, have given its sanction to the custom of "courting in bed"? Mr. Davies knows his countrymen, but it does seem strange.

Thus the story is more convincing as an allegorical entertainment than as a sober study of Welsh manners. As an entertainment it is excellent. Even if one sometimes tires of the inversions of Welsh English, they can be a pure delight—*e.g.*, "a man a saint is not." I did not quite follow the symbolism of the black Venus, a "rude" wooden statue, dressed in a petticoat for Sundays, which was condemned by public opinion to be thrown in the river, but returned with the embarrassing persistence of an amulet in a fairy story; but many interesting and profound things are said about love, especially by Olwen's eventual husband. Moreover, the story has a deliciously puckish conclusion, upon which, as upon many other aspects of the book, Mr. Rhys Davies is to be warmly congratulated. How pleasant it is to move among characters nearly all of whom have the capacity for poetic speech, if not always (for they have an eye to the main chance) for poetic feeling.

An Improvisation. "Listening Valley" is a strange medley of naïveté and perception, of charm and amateurishness, of shrewdness and irresponsibility. It begins as the story of two children, Lou and Tonia Melville, living with well-to-do parents in a town in Scotland. At first the sisters appear to be co-heroines; but Lou is soon married off to the son of the Melvilles' divorced and embarrassing neighbour (an object of much glamour to the children); then, with Tonia's marriage to a rich, avuncular kind of man much her senior, the parents are pushed into the background; after that the husband dies of exhaustion from too much war-work, leaving Tonia handsomely endowed; and then the stage is cleared for an idyll of Scottish village life and the romance which a neighbouring aerodrome lavishly provides. Nor are these all the changes and chances of Tonia's young life, for Miss Stevenson manages to fit in a spy story as well. Even so, I have missed out the "listening valley," the secret country of the mind in which, long after childhood, she spends enchanted hours.

But Miss Stevenson understands human nature much better than she understands—or, at any rate, seems to care about—the niceties of novel-construction. Though she treats her characters so cavalierly, when they are present she observes them closely. I liked the remark of the boy in the air raid: "I expect if my brother was here he'd laugh like anything. . . . This would be *nothing* to him, you know." Of such human touches the book is full; in her wayward, random course, Miss Stevenson picks them up by the dozen. Her chief fault is that she does not take the craft of fiction seriously.

Deeds of Darkness. It has been stated on unimpeachable authority that those whose deeds are evil love the darkness, and the inhabitants of Oldtown bore this warning in mind whenever the Sisters of Healing Darkness made their sinister appearances. The Sisters themselves, however, "believed in the curative properties of darkness and claimed never to have had a failure in the treatment of severe nervous and borderline cases." Their boast may have been justified, but their effect on the normal denizens of Oldtown was to provoke a considerable degree of the nervous disturbance that they undertook to cure.

Miss Ethel Lina White's almost unique gift for producing the atmosphere of a nightmare—that state of inflamed apprehensiveness when whatever one dreads most is precisely the thing that happens—is exploited to the full in "They See in Darkness"—and this in spite of the familiar surroundings in which the story moves and the commonplace character of some of the situations. It is the slight, deft touches which make our flesh creep.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

The Trojan Brothers. By Pamela Hansford Johnson. (*Michael Joseph; 9s. 6d.*)
The Black Venus. By Rhys Davies. (*Heinemann; 8s. 6d.*)
Listening Valley. By D. E. Stevenson. (*Collins; 8s. 6d.*)
They See in Darkness. By Ethel Lina White. (*Collins; 8s. 6d.*)

Pin-up Girl:
No.14. Susan Peters.

SUSAN PETERS, *a Hollywood High School Discovery, had intended to become a doctor. When she was induced to sign on with M.-G.-M. she made a plan, and decided that if after three years her screen career did not look brilliant, she would return to medicine. She appeared in "Dr. Gillespie's Assistant," "Random Harvest" and "Assignment in Britanny," but it was not until she had won the rôle opposite to Robert Taylor in "Song of Russia" that she decided she had made the grade. In private life, Miss Peters is Mrs. Richard Quine. She and her husband live in a San Francisco flat, where she does the cooking. Her tastes run to an outdoor life, and she is collecting fine furniture for her post-war home.*

CONVOY CONVERSATION.*

HOMEWARD BOUND FROM THE MIDDLE EAST.

By C. E. BENNETT.

MRS. A: "My *dear*, fancy finding *you* here! Is Hal with you?"

MRS. B: "Hal! My dear, *what* do you think? The man who is running this convoy must be a sadist. His main idea seems to be to cause as much discomfort and despondency as it 's humanly possible in the circumstances. He is *undoubtedly* suffering from inhibitions and frustration, and must have spent simply *hours* thinking up petty tyrannies to torture us. Hal, my dear, is *over there*—in that one with the three funnels! Where 's Tom?"

MRS. A: "Oh, Tom 's here, but—you 'll *never* believe it—we 're in different cabins! I 'm in a two-berth with the oddest little creature *and* a baby—I gave her a drink last night—the baby's mother, I mean. Fortunately, I brought a bottle of Scotch with me to give as a present to my Mother. I was having one myself when she arrived—quite done up, poor thing. It simply wouldn't have been human if I 'd not offered her one. The ship 's dry, you know—or didn't you? Well, it *is*! It 's simply too *incredible*, I know! Poor Mother won't get much of that bottle, I 'm afraid. I saved it out of our ration. Poor Tom kept on wondering where the odd bottle was, and I pretended that we 'd had it and he 'd forgotten! I don't know whether to tell him or *not* now. I think perhaps *not*. Poor Mother! I think perhaps it would be kinder to finish it, as a tot or two would really probably be worse than none. Let sleeping dogs lie, and all that! Well, as I was saying, I gave the little creature a noggin—after we 'd tidied the poor baby up. She 'd left *all* her luggage behind—no, not altogether, although it quite well might have been. The odd basket and what-not that one always has simply *glued* to one when travelling with a small baby, she 'd left it with the other luggage, and the poor baby was simply longing to have a wash-and-brush-up, so I gave the poor thing the run of my beauty box and my new rubber sponge. By the time we 'd finished with young Albert he smelt like a barber's shop and we were quite exhausted, so, as I was saying, we had a not-undeserved noggin. I must admit I gave her a pretty stiff one, as I didn't want to appear mean, and she looked so done in, poor thing! Of course, I 'm used to the stuff, but she evidently was not. She told me the story of her life, including that of her sister, who does a strip-tease act ending by doing the boys out of their fun by emulating Lady Godiva and letting down her lovely red hair. Apparently, she 's a pianist too, but she doesn't really care about playing the piano. Apparently, this sister has *the* most perfect torso and, besides playing the piano, has other gifts *and* a generous nature. It was really *most* interesting. But tell me, who have *you* got?"

MRS. B: "Oh, mine are all rather dim. I 'm in a four-berth. One 's a missionary and the other two are Levantines—wives of chaps who have already gone home—results of the British occupation of Egypt! In a way, I 'm rather lucky, as the cabin is large and none of them appears to have any luggage to speak of, and there 's little dressing or undressing on their part. None of them ever wash. The missionary probably thinks it 's indecent to expose her form—she probably knows best—and the other two just don't like water. So I have the entire water ration to myself. The missionary discreetly shuts her eyes when I perform my ablutions; the other two just goggle. Who 's Tom got?"

MRS. A: "Oh, he 's in a two-berth with a Polish professor. Rather a nice old bird who speaks practically nothing but Polish, which limits the conversation somewhat, as Tom, being a typical product of the English Public School system, speaks only the simplest phrases of his mother tongue. Apparently, this morning the poor Pole didn't feel too good, so Tom offered him some of his Eno's. After a prolonged scrutiny of the bottle the Professor said 'Headache—no, pile'—all his b's are p's, and vice versa—'no, bregnancy—berhaps,' and took a large dose!"

MRS. B: "Oh, no—my dear, how *too* marvellous! Where is he? I *must* see him."

MRS. A: "He 's lying back on the sofa in the lounge and Tom is sitting opposite eyeing him like an expectant midwife!"

MRS. B: "But, my dear, as Tom 's in a two-berth, can't you do a swop with the Professor?"

MRS. A: "Well, it 's not quite so easy as it appears at first glance. Maybe Tom's Pole, being 'bregnant,' might not mind going in with my nursing mother, but I can't help feeling that she might object! And, anyway, I don't think her bedtime stories would be at all suitable for the Professor! But, joking apart, we have tried to get together. We went to see the E.S.O.——"

MRS. B: "That frightful little fellow just like a monkey who let us all stagger up the gang-plank and then turned us back like a herd of sheep and kept us waiting in the cold wind—I know."

MRS. A: "What would you expect? The milk of human kindness, if it ever flowed from that breast, is now very definitely dehydrated. The answer was a lemon. It would have been considerably more fruity if I 'd had my way, but you know what Tom is. He shushed me, but I flatter myself that my silence was 'bregnant'!"

MRS. B: "You poor dear! Anyway, you 're luckier than I am. Tom *is* on the same ship!"

MRS. A: "That 's not much consolation, really. If we get torpedoed, they 're sure to put Tom in a different lifeboat. Their main idea seems to be to segregate the sexes."

MRS. B: "Oh, my dear, you remember Nina? She took home about *ten* trunks of *the* most marvellous clothes and about fifty pairs of Nylon stockings!"

MRS. A: "Stockings! I just haven't *any*. It was much too hot to wear them. I bought a pair for the Duke's visit about two years ago, and when I wanted them six months later for a 'do' at the Legation they couldn't be found. We turned the whole bungalow upside-down, and eventually I had to go without, having darkened my legs with coffee, which was a *huge* success, as everyone thought I had the *sheerest* silk ones on! Eventually, I discovered one of them in the kitchen. Cook had been using it to strain the *consommé*!"

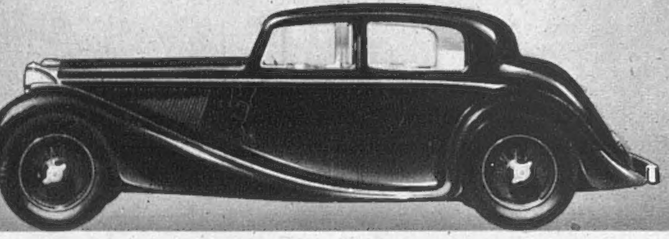
MRS. B: "My dear! How too delicious!"

MRS. A: "They *are* amazing creatures, aren't they? It 's so *devitalising* trying to educate them. Well, my dear, I must fly now. I weakly consented to make a fourth at bridge. Come along to my cabin after your bath and I 'll give you a shot of Mother's whisky."

THE END.

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

Jaguar



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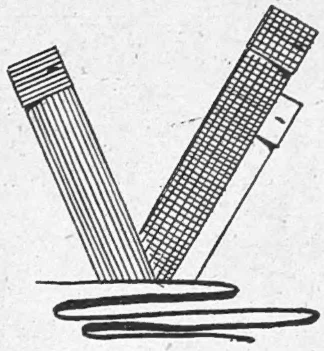

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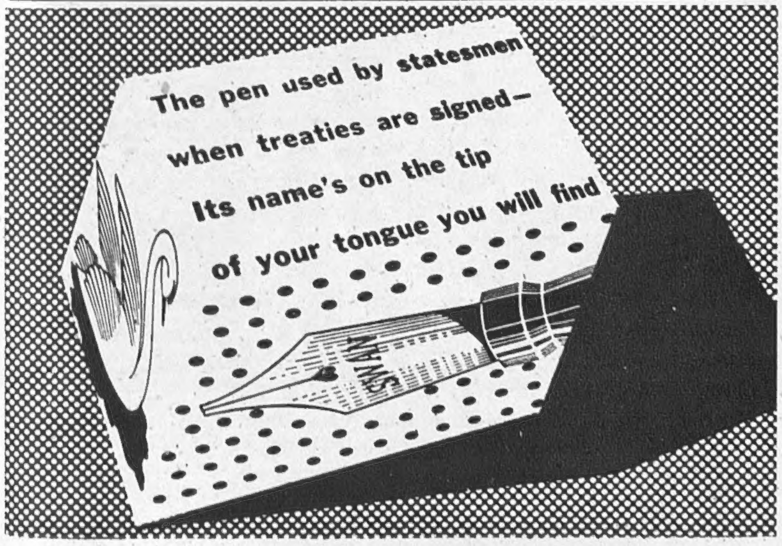

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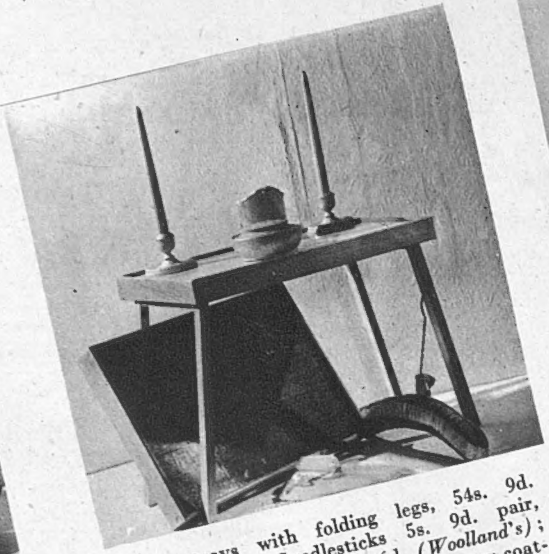

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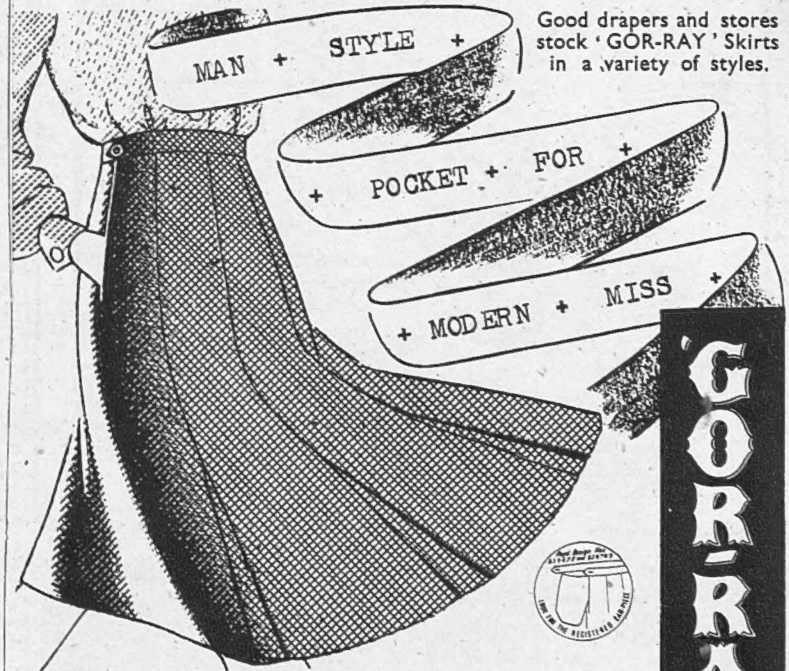

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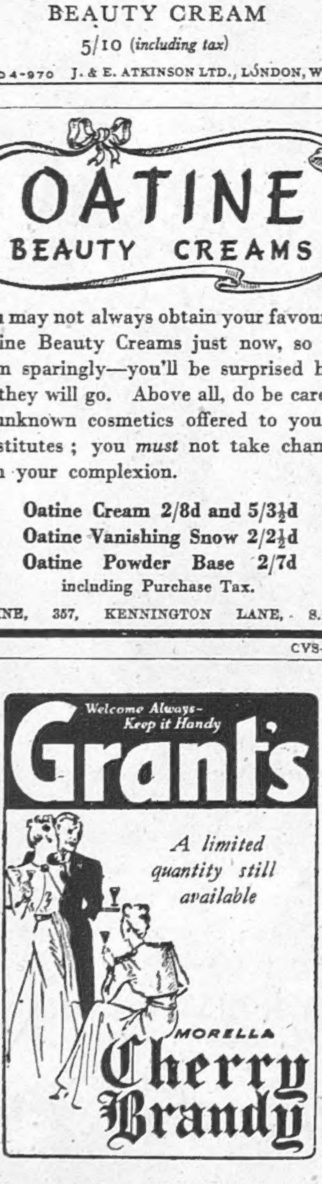

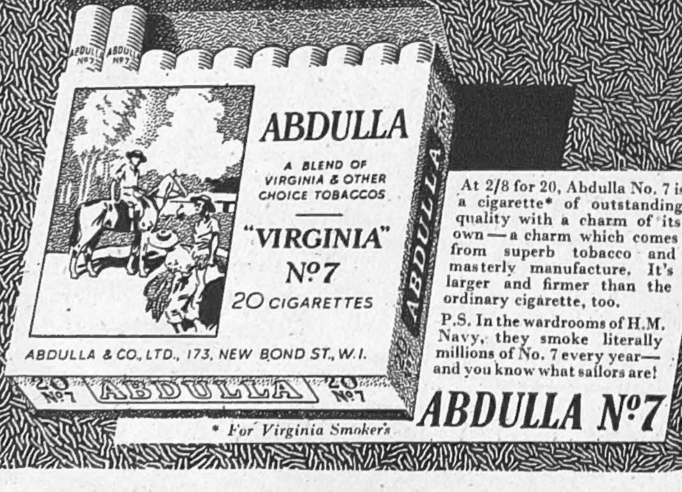

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